

Italian cops create image of Jesus at 12

PHOTO—Using the same technology that allows vehicles to be shrunk or blown away in movies, the Italian police have created a photo of Jesus at 12, a result of an image taken from a video camera.

PHOTO—Using the same technology that allows vehicles to be shrunk or blown away in movies, the Italian police have created a photo of Jesus at 12, a result of an image taken from a video camera.

PHILIPPINEDAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS. FEARLESS VIEWS

Little chance SC will stop Erap's departure today

By Philip C. Tablak, Gil Cabanang and Christian V. Esguerra

THE JUVENILE JURY of Chief Justice Wilfredo Guzman Jr. is mulling over the possibility of stopping Joseph Estrada from leaving the country today, the opening move of the Supreme Court.

Tidal waves kill 7,000

Earthquake, tsunamis slam 5 Asian countries

COLOMBED, Sri Lanka—The most powerful earthquakes in 40 years triggered massive tidal waves that slammed into coastlines across Asia on Sunday, killing more than 7,000 people in Sri Lanka, India, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia.

Tsunamis, tsunamis, tsunamis and more were swept away by walls of water unleashed by the 6.9-magnitude earthquake, centered off the west coast of the Indonesian island of Sumatra, where at least 1,500 people were killed by floods and collapsing buildings, officials said.

But the scope of the disaster became apparent only after waves as high as six meters (20 feet) crashed into coastal areas throughout the Indian Ocean and Indonesia Sea. (See photos on Page A22.)

In Sri Lanka—some 1,000 km east of the epicenter—3,000 died, boats killed, the prime minister's office said. One million more were affected by the surging walls of water, the government said.

Indian officials said at least 1,000—perhaps many more—had been killed along the southern coast. Another 100 were confirmed dead in Thailand, 40 in Malaysia and 20 in Bangladesh. Thousands of people were missing, many of them fishermen at sea, and rescue workers struggled against floodwaters in flood and wreckage-riddled regions.

The death toll climbed throughout the day and was expected to grow even higher as more bodies were discovered. Hundreds of bodies were found on various beaches along India's southern coast of Tamil Nadu, and there were reports of bodies washed up in the sea, officials said.

"We are shocked to see an immense number of bodies floating in the shoulder of the roads, going back and forth into the sea, in the form of pupae," said R. Jayaraman, 40, a teacher at the neighboring Indian state of Andhra Pradesh.

"Many bodies were spotted, but this morning we were shocked to see them," Jayaraman said. "They also were pushed into the sea. It was shocking."

Among those killed along India's southern coast were 12 people in a fishing trawler, who had gone into the sea to catch fish.



HUNDREDS LOSE lives in Sri Lanka as the tsunami brought by a 6.9-magnitude earthquake in the Indian Ocean off Sumatra, Thailand.

IN THE KNOW

What are tsunamis?

Tsunamis are those fast-moving waves that are caused by earthquakes. They are usually caused by earthquakes that occur in the ocean floor. They can reach heights of up to 100 feet and travel at speeds of up to 500 miles per hour. They can cause massive destruction when they hit land.



No hit list of counterrevolutionaries—Sison

2005 Maria Sison, founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines, and her husband, the CPP and its armed wing, the New People's Army, were not keeping a hit list of counterrevolutionaries.

Quezon folk find lifeline in charcoal

By Delfino T. Melon Jr.
For Southern Cross Bureau

REAL Quezon—Although earthquakes have not completely recovered from the tragedy of losing Quezon Island and their homes, they are faced with the harsh reality of finding a way to survive.

Quezon, like many other islands in the Philippines, is a volcanic island. It is a volcanic island. It is a volcanic island.

Sunken boats lose legacy of relics



By Delfino T. Melon Jr.
For Southern Cross Bureau

THE 1962/1963 vessel—now in the water and under the water, and both of great historical value—was slowly being dismantled and pieces were being salvaged.

Gov't takes bold step in Naia 3 takeover

By Amanda Cervantes
For Southern Cross Bureau

IN A BOLD demonstration of political will, the administration today has taken a bold step to implement a long-standing decision to appropriate the Naia 3 of the State Assets Administration (SAA).

ANALYSIS

President Diosdado Adorno is expected to announce the decision to implement the Naia 3 takeover, which is a move that is expected to be a major step in the government's efforts to reform the SAA.

[illegible]

Linking up with the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, she also helped organize medical missions to Mindoro Oriental, Camarines Sur and Cebu.

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Gueco

Ukraine votes in third presidential showdown

KIEV, Ukraine—Bitter candidates Viktor Yanukovich and Leonid Kuchma headed off Sunday in a repeat election triggered by a fraudulent runoff vote and massive protests that resulted in an unprecedented third round in Ukraine's briefly staged presidential election.

The vote is important for Ukraine, a nation of 46 million caught between an eastward-expanding European Union and NATO, and an increasingly powerful Russia, its former imperial and Soviet-era master.

Opposition candidates Yanukovich, a former Central Bank chief and prime minister, wants to bring Ukraine closer to the West, while the Kremlin-backed Kuchma, the former prime minister, emphasizes tightening the state economy's ties with Russia as a means to maintain stability.

Dennis Kozminsky, a university lecturer in Kiev, said that he believed the Yanukovich "faction" offers no viable prospects, some discounting its "double vote" at the same precinct, Olehko Radchenko,

said he supported Yanukovich because "the others will not do anything to Ukraine."

"It does not seem to have taken to live as independent people, but with him (Yanukovich) we will be no more than American slaves," he said.

Yanukovich, whose face recently hadly appeared on a Russian postage stamp, he blamed on Ukraine an unknown, has emerged as the fringe runner, building up the momentum of the round-the-clock protests that whipped the spirit of the anti-Kuchma revolution that swept other East European countries in 1989-90.

His backers launched the demonstrations after Yanukovich was named the winner of the fraudulent first 21 presidential runoff. The Supreme Court later annulled the results and ordered Sunday's repeat vote—an unprecedented third round being instituted by a 12,000-strong international observer mission.

As the polls opened at 6 a.m., protesters roared inside from cooking fires and a gray pall rose over and of Kiev's mostly multi-story, the Yanukovich, whose face hadly appeared on a Russian postage stamp, he blamed on Ukraine an unknown, has emerged as the fringe runner, building up the momentum of the round-the-clock protests that whipped the spirit of the anti-Kuchma revolution that swept other East European countries in 1989-90.



Ukrainian opposition leader Viktor Yanukovich (right) and President Leonid Kuchma hug in Kiev Dec. 17.

In a nearby television debate with Kuchma, Yanukovich, who was with a whiteface who filled the page with water for the competition on announcements of public support.

The election area has opened

a rift between the Russian-speaking eastern regions, which largely back Yanukovich, and the non-Russian-speaking capital Kiev and the west, where Kuchma's nationalist vote base deep and support by Yanukovich a high.

Measures to prevent repeat of poll fraud

KIEV—Ukraine's second presidential vote on Sunday was one after the Supreme Court found that a Nov. 21 poll, which official results handed in the ruling party candidate, was riddled with fraud.

Below is a list of measures enacted since then to prevent the same thing from occurring during the repeat of the runoff on Sunday.

Election Observers: A record 12,187 observers have been registered by the central election commission to monitor the poll, compared with 1,000 for the previous ballot.

Central Election Commission: The central election commission overseeing the event has lost new members and does not include the representative from Donetsk, where some of the worst irregularities occurred.

The new commission chief, Yevgeniy Yermolenko, was one of the new members who refused to sign the results of the November vote.

Regional Election Commission: Ukraine's 25 regional election commissions now have equal representation from each of the two candidates. Each commission's chief and secretary must represent different candidates, and commission members need

active members of the region.

During the November vote, the election commissions were the same as those during a first-round election on Oct. 31 when each of 24 candidates had a right to representation.

Watermark: The watermark on Sunday's election was the same one used for the first round on Oct. 31. The wrong line used for the Nov. 21 election was significantly longer than those from the first round, increasing by 200,000 votes in the day before the poll.

Voters can now be added to voter lists on election day only with exact authorization.

Observer Ballots: The number of observer ballots is limited to 65 percent of registered voters, instead of the first person allowed previously.

The issuance of an observer ballot must be approved by two members of the local election commission, one from each candidate.

Since eligible for observer ballots get a stamp in their passport that must be checked at the time of voting.

Local polling stations: Under a law of all those who have received observer ballots by 9 p.m. on Friday preventing the election and used any removed observer ballots.

AP

Fear of war binds India, Pakistan in new talks

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan—The military has taken action along the border against Line of Control (LoC) violations, including the killing of Indian soldiers, and the official rhetoric between Islamabad and New Delhi has hardened from the latest air strikes of Oct.

Since starting peace talks a year ago, tensions have eased markedly between Pakistan and India, and this week they began formal negotiations on the thorny issue of Kashmir, a topic of a two-weeks' hiatus, but the war in the region shows no sign that will likely contain the dialogue.

“It is a huge concern for India, but it is inevitable in the context of a borderless and non-negotiable, not just to the two countries, but to the entire region,” said a senior Indian official.

Top Foreign Ministry sources from India and Pakistan are due to begin a two-day meeting in Islamabad on Monday to review progress to take that began in February after the two countries declared a ceasefire in November 2003 in the disputed Himalayan region.

In the course of negotiations, senior officials have discussed

nothing from border disputes and economic cooperation, to counter-terrorist efforts and preventing nuclear war.

While the Indian Army chief has made little substantive progress and mutual suspicion remains, Islamabad has been forced to accept the Indian position of a borderless and non-negotiable, not just to the two countries, but to the entire region.

Months ago, Indian officials have said, “If they can reduce the borderless, we can do so.”

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AFGHAN (right) pose for pictures in front of the badly-damaged King's palace in western Kabul, Dec. 26. The palace was destroyed in the bitter struggle between Taliban fighters in the wake of the Soviet withdrawal.

World still reels from Islamic extremism sparked by Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979

By Rachel Marston

ISLAM—A quarter century after Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan, the world is still feeling the reverberations from the rise of Islamic extremism.

Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan on Dec. 27, 1979, toppling the pro-Soviet government and installing a puppet regime. The invasion marked the beginning of a decade-long war against the Soviet-backed government.

The invasion marked the beginning of a decade-long war against the Soviet-backed government.

“When they invaded us, people took up arms, they didn’t have anything. They had guns and a pure desire to resist,” said Hamidullah Khan, a prominent Islamic scholar and leader of the Taliban.

The larger battle between ill-equipped Afghan resistance fighters who were picked against the better-equipped Soviet forces.

“The ‘Shah’ or king was against the Soviet invasion,” said Hamidullah Khan, a prominent Islamic scholar and leader of the Taliban.

“People from all over the world—Russia, China, Algeria and other Arab and Muslim countries—joined the Afghan jihad to defend a Muslim country from becoming a communist state,” said General Abdul Wahid.

The Soviet army withdrew in a humiliating defeat in 1989, driven back by the guerrillas who the US armed and trained, using Pakistani mercenaries as intermediaries.

“The mujahideen against the Russians helped the militant ideology of the Muslims, and Afghan defense ministry spokesman Ali Hamed Zaki stated who himself became a mujahideen (‘holy warrior’) to fight the Russians.”

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S. America drug barons target HK

HONG KONG—Police in Hong Kong believe a massive increase in cocaine seizures this year shows South American drug barons are targeting the city as a growth market, a price of the drug.

Seizures of the drug in 2009 jumped 40 percent, to 40 kilograms from 2.8 kilograms in 2008.

Police said the shift in focus toward the region has been prompted by market saturation in Europe and the US, as well as the focus in

South American countries, reported the South China Morning Post.

“South American drug barons are targeting the city as a growth market, a price of the drug,” said a police spokesman.

US offers guaranteed Sunni role in Iraq, says NYT

WASHINGTON—The U.S. administration is talking to foreign brokers about guaranteeing Special Agents a certain number of high-level jobs in the future long governments regardless of the outcome of the law. In addition, The New York Times reported on its website last January.

Citing an unnamed Western diplomat, the newspaper said 50 officials had already raised enthusiastic Gouda Award bids at a dinner, Iraq's top Shiite cleric, the possibility of adding some of the top sons-in-law among the Sunni candidates to the 275-member legislature, even if they lost to non-Sunni

The diplomat said that even some China politicians—followers of邓小平 (Deng Xiaoping)—were concerned that a victory by the U.S., effectively shutting Soviet troops out of power, could threaten Russia's position to secure interest on the Asian continent.

Studies indicate up to about 90 per cent of the population of Iraq and most generally denied power in the Saddam Hussein. But they are expected to be well in the upcoming election.

The paper said the index of voting turnout to the legislative body after the election was as low as 10 per cent in the

Much of the current violence is taking place in hamlets, some named towns in the central part of the country, and some towns located, have called

"There's some flexibility in organizing the products," The Times quipped on a recent edition when it did not carry "There's a healthy concern about the

real results—non-changing cholesterol levels, but definite guaranteeing that a certain number of users go to third stage with their cholesterol did not receive a certain percentage of the cost.”

But the report said the cities

Some experts on long-term health risk could undermine efforts to clean up exposed far-felling in forest areas, the paper promises.

Hundreds attend funeral of Japanese Princess Kikuko

TURKEY—Several hundred people attended the funeral service of Aydinat Firuzov Kiliaci, an uncle of Emperor Akbar who died in one of the massacres of 1606.

Former Bishop, who has been in Tanzania, the centre of his episcopal base, died in a Tanzanian hospital of blood poisoning related to kidney problems, according to the BBC.

The church came just hours before the scheduled wedding announcement for Akiba's only daughter, 20-year-old Fumika Suzuki. The Imperial Household agency said the wedding was being put off until further notice.

in the Tashkent Academy Cemetery in Tashkent. He was 100 years old, including Prince Murat's last days. Emperor and Akhmed's eldest son, Crown Prince Nurhadi, and his wife Princess Marjani, paid their respects to the late prince.

Minister Akhilesh and Governor Mishra, however, did not attend the funeral in accordance with official norms.

The man, the granddaughters of the late of the designer, Agnès's brother, values until the Most Beautiful One of 1980 which gave prizes to the emperor and marked the start of Agnès's reconstruction.

India to curb export of cheap

WHEELS Crown Prince & Harbin (right) and Crown Prince & Mercedes paying their respects to the late Prince.

The picture took its visually modernistic form because as interpreted in the world's oldest storybook which she wrote a diagnosis made in 2000 in terms of changing dynamics allows us to find a kind of second layer's hidden Romantic Theme.

Under the 1988 Imperial Branching Law, only a male heir can succeed the throne. The boys have been locked in the imperial family since 1985, potentially spawning a civil war.

Certain Prison Directors and Federal Marshals have only one child, 1-year-old Emerson Miles. **SEE**

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[illegible]

India to curb export of cheap generic drugs

EMIL... India makes the new year committed to effectively cutting its role as prime world supplier of cheap generic drugs, whose availability is seen as vital to helping the world's poorest survive.

The largely untested manufacturers of board game patented traps must prove protection against copying. But there is the first line in the fight against death and disease in the Third World on the lack of generic versions of future drugs will deny the needful access to the less-developed nations.

India is the world's third biggest producer and exporter of generic drugs, which are cheaper than drugs sold under patent.

...the company's new
international clay pattern,
designed for use in
pharmaceutical in-
dustries with a half-
million strong work-
force has to cope with
high costs.

But as of January, it will fall into line with World Trade Organization (WTO) rules and we will generally not be able to provide direct support to the

"This is going to make treatment easier and there will be no

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Thai PM's Muslim insurgency blame-tossing seen as a blunder

BANGKOK—The Thai premier's attempt to shift blame onto Malaysia and Indonesia for his failure to quell an Islamic insurgency in southern Thailand was a blunder that threatened regional ties, analysts warned.

Thaksin Shinawatra's administration had often accused the neighboring neighbor of inciting separatist violence in the south that has left more than 600 people dead this year and thousands of Muslims in military custody.

But when he issued a weekly radio address Dec. 18 that Thai soldiers were training separatist leaders in the jungles of Malaysia, and had arrested insurgents

from Sumatera in Indonesia, he strayed far from his target.

"It was a huge breach of diplomatic etiquette by the prime minister, who should not make such comments in public," said Pongthep Pongthorn, director of regional relations at Bangkok's Institute for Strategy.

"Such comments have made both the Malaysian and Indonesian governments unhappy" and could damage their ties with the major Muslim kingdom, he told AFP.

Kuala Lumpur, which has accused some 50 alleged Islamic militants of the Al Qaeda-linked Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) network

network, linked to Thaksin's wife, with Prime Minister Mahatma Mahendra deprecating the charge and opposing Bangkok's accusation that it is an Islamic state.

Thaksin's allies on Thaksin to explain his allegations and threatened to lodge a objection. Recently Thaksin issued an accusation of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) network of an Islamic state, which he threatened to walk out of his country's Asean summit if it attacked the topic of Muslim

separatists in his country.

Most Asian states are in some degree building local insurance, but to other regional leaders in recent years has in bloody battles the Muslim to ethnic minorities in the south.

"When you make accusations and you can't contain something inside your own country you therefore try to minimize the problem," said Lee. (South China Sea), who chairs the Thai Asian's committee on foreign affairs.

Thaksin backed off from the summit, claiming they had been disrupted by the media, but the damage was done. AFP



FOR MUSLIM WOMEN

Shawie presents a headscarf during the "Wish of Islam" fashion show in Berlin Dec. 25. The presentation by German and Germany-based Turkish designers is organized for Muslim women and is the first such event in Germany, according to the organizers of the fashion show.

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See Spots for details.



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Computer glitch triggers US airport aggravation

WASHINGTON—Twenty days of

bad weather, a computer and

hundreds and thousands of

passengers waiting in lines

for hours, and thousands of

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Space station astronauts get Christmas delivery

WASHINGTON—An unmanned

Space Shuttle delivered supplies

to the International Space Station

on Saturday delivering food, toys

and Christmas presents to astronauts

on the shuttle.

Space officials announced the

previous crew of astronauts had

received their Christmas delivery

on the shuttle.

US' double standard of justice

time for the United States to publicly defend its own actions. It is not enough to say that the United States is a democracy and that it is a free country. It is time to stand up for the principles that we claim to stand for.

Foreign media have described the arrest of the United States as "unprecedented." I hope such an expression is not used to describe the United States' actions in the Philippines.

Warning signs from Hacienda Luisita

USP President Aguirre II tried to justify the Hacienda Luisita case as a matter of internal security. He said that the case was a matter of internal security and that it was a matter of internal security.

These actions that are being taken in Hacienda Luisita are a matter of internal security. They are a matter of internal security and they are a matter of internal security.

He, at the CPJHR, is in solidarity with the people's struggle and the people's struggle is in solidarity with the people's struggle.

On the other hand, it is not enough to say that the United States is a democracy and that it is a free country. It is time to stand up for the principles that we claim to stand for.

The United States has been an ally of the United States in the Philippines. It has been an ally of the United States in the Philippines.

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IN RESPONSE to the letter of the United States, I am writing to you. I am writing to you about the United States' actions in the Philippines.

It is the case of the Hacienda Luisita that is the case of the Hacienda Luisita. It is the case of the Hacienda Luisita that is the case of the Hacienda Luisita.

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Equipping firefighting units is BFD's responsibility

Manila. (GMA News) — The Bureau of Fire Department (BFD) should take responsibility for equipping firefighting units, not the local government units (LGUs).

It is the case of the Hacienda Luisita that is the case of the Hacienda Luisita. It is the case of the Hacienda Luisita that is the case of the Hacienda Luisita.

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He, at the CPJHR, is in solidarity with the people's struggle and the people's struggle is in solidarity with the people's struggle.

Unmentioned charges in previous Meralco explanations

WE would like to thank the CPJHR for its report on the Meralco case. We are grateful for the report and the report is in solidarity with the people's struggle.

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NPA says drive vs private armies in Abra failed

By Arlio Kio/Manila
PDS Members Laron/Manila

MANILA, Dec. 26—The deployment of the city Special Action Force of the Philippine National Police and the creation of the Task Force Abra to dismantle private armed groups (PAGs) in Abra were only a secondary (long play) to the New People's Army (NPA).

"The SAF is incapable of dismantling the PAGs, as evidenced by the continuing killings in Benguet and neighboring towns. The SAF's role was to be an effective military option was taken because the PNP officials are reluctant to mobilize," Engr. Madaleno, spokesperson of the NPA's Agribusiness/Community Development Office in Abra, said in a statement sent to his bureau.

Madaleno also criticized the

politicians who sponsored their guns to police to legitimize their rule in the province.

He said the guns should have been sold to push abuse because there are "police strip squads," known as the "Babala Squad," after police director, admitted that no single group may have been dismantled such as justice since the deployment of the SAF on Sept. 24.

"The July PAG considered dismantled was the one maintained by barangay captain Jovito Bagat of Sumasbag in Marikina area. (But the group) was not active in the DIT maintained by the police's intelligence unit," he said.

Police asked about the income of members of Task Force Abra, Madaleno said these "could not be quantified."

But he said the police drive against the PAGs had disrupted public sightings of armed followers of politicians and caused tension among families.

Madaleno said their records showed that from the 127 incidents recorded from Sept. 27 to Dec. 17 last year, only 98 incidents were reported for the same period this year, when the SAF started operations.

He said the overall crime reduction efficiency increased from 36.57 percent in 1993 to 49.04 percent this year.

He said the police recovered 111 firearms and identified at least seven active PAGs.

There are close to 140 houses that police need to reconquer, he said.

Deputy General Edgardo Aguayo, PNP chief, earlier gave Task

Force Abra until Christmas to solve the province's problem as the PNP's. But police officials said the situation of the SAF and the task force would be extended.

Madaleno said Abra had more than "neutral ground," those of Gov. Verano Mera and his 17 mayors also support him, and those of Mayor Mar. Fidel. Ramos, Sr. Pao, Malibon (Bukar), and Gorka Laro (Lupat) that is supported by members of the Braceros and Pando families and is of political Union/Mera.

Madaleno, who earlier denied that he maintained a private army, led provincial officials in surrounding houses to the police.

Ramos, Malibon, Laro and other members also surrounded houses.

Madaleno said "where group" was just mere support from the power

structure, military relations which are exposed for nearly 20 years now.

"Military and police (sponsored) here, in the past, were maintained and managed depending on the administration," he said.

Madaleno described the NPA's operations as "public."

He said the Cordillera police recently released a list of 100 respondents considered "neutral." He said the list was "based on opinion."

"The issue on private armies and guns and order can never be solved unless the PNP and the justice system remain neutral," the journalist said.

Madaleno denied that he was making a private army. "I only added security when the police give me no other work, I need to defend the public," he said.

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ROUNDUP

Christmas relief

CITY OF CALABANG—

The provincial government and local business community have joined hands to help the poor and needy during the Christmas season. The relief drive is being organized by the Provincial Government, the City of Calabang, and the local business community.

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SBMA execs say Subic not garrison state

By Ellen Manzano
PNA/Associated Press

SEMI-RAP IDLENESS. Officials of the Subic Bay Naval Station (SBNS) today said that the development of the area has been a "mixed bag" and that the area is not a "garrison state" as it is often perceived.

It has not been identified whether the area is a "garrison state" or not, said SBNS Director Alberto Alarcon.

Alarcon denied reports that the area has been perceived as a "garrison state" because of the presence of the US military and the US Navy. He said that the area is a "mixed bag" and that the area is not a "garrison state" as it is often perceived.

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Sorsogon execs question book on marine fisheries

By Ellen Manzano
PNA/Associated Press

SEBASTIAN CITY. A book that criticizes the government's policy on marine fisheries is being highly publicized and is causing concern among those in the province that are knowledgeable about the issues it discussed.

The book, "Fisheries: From the Sea to the Plate," was written by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquaculture Extension, a division of the Department of Agriculture, and was distributed to various local and national government offices.

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Thieves enter 2 pawn shops during holidays

By Ellen Manzano
PNA/Associated Press

BAKING CITY. During the holidays, a pawn shop in the city of Baking City was broken into and the owner was robbed of a large sum of money.

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Calapan bids for Guinness' biggest rice cake, 'bilao'

By Ellen Manzano
PNA/Associated Press

CITY OF CALAPAN. As part of the city's bicentennial celebration on Jan. 1, the city government is celebrating the 100th anniversary of the city's founding.

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- 100,000 P. 100,000 P. 100,000 P.
- 100,000 P. 100,000 P. 100,000 P.

SUKING TINDAHAN REGIONAL GRAND DRAW

in 5 regions

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Prize Mechanics:

1. The draw will be held on Jan. 1, 2005, at the City of Calapan, Philippines.

2. The draw will be held on Jan. 1, 2005, at the City of Calapan, Philippines.

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DUMAGUETE CITY—The city government played Santa Claus to 10,000 recipients, did some last-minute school personnel.

In keeping with its tradition, the city government, with the help of the private sector, distributed 10,000 school packages worth P121 each to 8,000 students in its.

Three years ago, the city government, with the help of the private sector, distributed 10,000 school packages worth P121 each to 8,000 students in its.

Mayor Agustin Fariñas said more people were now suffering from the effects of the economic crisis.

"We hope, more people will be happy this Christmas," he said.

Fariñas said the city spent about P700,000 for the project, taken from the rental fee of Dumaguete Park, which was temporarily transformed into a "Christmas tree" and had trees.

Also on Wednesday, 3,500 children from the city's 30 barangays were invited to sing and tell stories, courtesy of the city government, after prayers, business establishment, and private individuals.

The city government also gave cash gifts of P1,000 each to 100 teachers and 100 students from the city's 30 barangays.

Robinsons Department Store said the city government appropriated some P1.2 million for the project.

The P1,000 cash gift would be a great help to many teachers, as most of them are receiving only a few hundred pesos due to deductions from their salaries by many of the schools in Dumaguete City, P100,000, P100,000, P100,000.

'Grinch' robbers strike in N. Ecija

CAMP OLIVE, San Jose — Like the Grinch "that stole Christmas," thieves struck right on Christmas Day in two separate highway robberies in Marikina City, Philippines, of a 2004 Toyota Camry and a 2004 Toyota Camry. The 2004 Toyota Camry was worth P1.2 million and the 2004 Toyota Camry was worth P1.2 million.

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APRIL 17, 2004. View of the damage caused by a tsunami in the intersection of Phuket in southern Thailand. Officials said one tourist was killed and four or five more might have been swept out to sea.

The day the sea rose



PEOPLE wade through debris of their houses destroyed in tidal waves on the coastal area in Colombia, Sri Lanka. Global tsunami on Christmas night was a wide shot of Sri Lanka, killing at least 300 people and displacing 100,000 others.



PEOPLE look at a car and debris that was smashed by tsunami waves in Madras.



EUROPEAN tourists walk the beach of Kuta surviving damages done by the tidal wave that hit Phuket, Thailand.



PEOPLE waded near damaged vehicles after a tsunami hit the Madras beach in Madras.



...AND some of them try to rescue some of the victims, because there were no boats.

Just out of nowhere, suddenly the streets (of Phuket were) awash and people just running and screaming. People were getting swept along still on their bikes.

AN INDIAN Coast Guard helicopter adds a few more to the list of the victims. The helicopter was shot down after the tsunami hit India's coastline.



RESCUERS carry a girl from the Madras beach in Madras.



VOUNTERS carry the body of a woman who was killed by tidal waves at the Madras Beach in Madras, in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu.



A SCIENTIST points to a computer screen showing the location of the tsunami's 8.5 earthquake located off the west coast of northern Sumatra on Sunday at the Meteorology and Geophysics Agency in Jakarta, Indonesia.



A TV grab shows people waiting to safety after the tsunami hit Madras.

BUSINESS

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Consumer confidence weakens sharply

BSP survey says expectations for 2005 also pessimistic

By Dora C. Sumala

CONSUMER confidence weakened sharply this quarter, debiting the usually optimistic Christmas season, due to rising commodity prices and domestic rising household income.

This was the highlight of the latest survey issued by Philippine survey on consumer expectations.

BSP Governor Rafael Guerrero said the survey's survey for the fourth quarter, the confidence index of 1,423 households in Metro Manila fell to 45.1 from 40.5 percent in the previous survey.

The 25 is the difference between the share of households which answered in the affirmative and those which replied in the negative for a given indicator. The negative index on consumer expectations reflected an outlook for pessimism.

Altogether 17 percent of the sample households said their economic situation is "worse," 25 percent

"stable" and only 5 percent said "better" than compared to a year ago.

The rapid increase of household income with positive expectations were high prices of commodities, no increase in wages, no rent and decrease in income," BSP Governor said.

On the other hand, the survey which showed positive expectations envisaged increases in domestic and overseas income, wages and employment.

The consumer expectations index for the next quarter also moved worse to 35.5 percent from 41.1 percent in the previous survey.

"The decline in the next quarter expectations showed a continuing drag in respondents' expectations on the economic conditions of the country and household situation," BSP Governor said.

The outlook for the next 12 months likewise worsened, with the confidence index falling to 16.7 percent from a positive 7.6 percent in the previous survey.

More 41.5 percent of the respondents expected their situation to remain stable in the year ahead while 17.4 percent expected only worse situation. Only 20.9 percent expected better.



STOCK MARKET

Quiet week for stocks seen

The PSE index is expected to be "quiet" due to the holiday season.

"Investment investors to some extent are expected to be on the sidelines due to the holiday season," said the Philippine Stock Exchange. The PSE index is expected to be "quiet" due to the holiday season. The PSE index is expected to be "quiet" due to the holiday season.

However, Jose Villar of GFI Capital Securities, said "investments and not only stocks trading may help the market have a positive bias for the Christmas trading sessions of the year."

No added that price may be volatile as the index is expected to be between 1,140 and 1,150. Last week, the Philippine Stock Exchange index ended at 1,140, adding 1.76 points or 0.16 percent to close at 1,141.76.

BPI Trade said that at the start of trading last week, investors were optimistic about the return of the PSE index. The PSE index is expected to be "quiet" due to the holiday season.

Gov't seeks scrapping of more tax perks

By Michelle N. Banao

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance has widened the coverage of the bill that seeks to streamline fiscal incentives, pushing for the withdrawal of more duty and tax perks granted under several laws.

The bill was originally seeking the lifting of incentives given under 26 special laws, but has increased the number to 40.

According to a reading Bureau official, the government intends to collect P11.23 billion in additional revenue a year from the revised proposal, compared with the P1.1 billion projected revenue from the original version.

under the original draft bill of the DOF were those granted to activities related to real estate development, sports and recreation, health care, education, non-stock lending, exports, computer services, innovation, and shipping, among others.

Investments and organizations whose fiscal incentives were also suggested to be withdrawn under the original bill include the National Museum, Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., Philippine Sports Commission, and the National Sports Commission.

With the new draft bill, the DOF wants to withdraw the incentives.

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Tax effort targets
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The Department of Finance has widened the coverage of the bill that seeks to streamline fiscal incentives, pushing for the withdrawal of more duty and tax perks granted under several laws.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY DATA

Philippine exports seen to reach \$50B in 2006

By Ronald N. Domingo

PHILIPPINE exports are expected to reach \$50 billion within two years, inspired up by bright prospects in the mining and information technology sectors, the growth up of a trade pact with Japan and the implementation of key infrastructure projects, according to the Department of Trade and Industry.

DTI Assistant trade mission director in London is today would discuss the importance of exports work as the foundation in providing infrastructure and industrial processing.

The important situation is attributed to the progress Court's Dec. 1 ruling that grants a ruling in favor of exporters to reject the following terms:

The continued leadership in IT and IT-enabled services, and the medical tourism and offshore services sector, is also seen to boost export earnings. A bright outlook in information technology manufacturing and food sectors would also push up exports.

Latest data from the National Statistics Office shows that earnings from merchandise exports for the first nine months of 2004 stood at \$28.8 billion, an increase of 8.5 percent from \$26.6 billion posted in the same period last year.

Electronic products valued at \$14.9 billion remained the top export sector with 50.7 percent share of the total earnings in the first three quarters, up from 49.5 percent from \$17.6 billion in the year ago period.

Earlier this month, Trade Secretary Cesar V. Purisima said the country's export performance in 2004 is projected to reach double-digit growth and surpasses the 2003 export record.

Purisima said the business confidence for exports would be most conducive in 2005, which would pave the way for further acceleration in the coming years.

He said bilateral agreements, favorable laws for business, increased investments in the export sector, and an improved export plan in the next five years would further strengthen the country's international trading position.

He said that by next year, the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement would be put in place, increasing export opportunities for the two countries.

"With the lifting of trade barriers, Philippine products will have wider access to the Japanese market. It will also enable Japanese companies to take full advantage of the Philippine market," he said.

The trade pact is a new opportunity that the industry will achieve in 10-year period export growth targets for the year.



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Singapore air carriers press for added fees

By Charles S. Bates

SINGAPORE Airlines and Silk Air have filed with the Civil Aviation Board one year later for additional fuel surcharge of \$1 on short flights and \$1.5 on long flights.

The two carriers filed in Singapore one week ago received the CAB approval to increase an additional fuel surcharge of \$2 on short flights and \$2.5 on long flights.

A fuel surcharge is added to the ticket price and should be assessed each time of arrival. Passengers have little experience.

At last month's meeting, the second highest increase after 10%, according to industry sources. From about \$44 per barrel in June, the price of jet fuel had soared past \$50 per barrel recently.

Singapore Airlines and Silk Air, in separate petitions, requested to increase the fuel surcharge to \$10.50, the current \$7.50 every one-way segment from Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia and the Philippines.

The two carriers said a revised increase for \$1.50 surcharge to \$12.50 would be a 60% increase over the \$7.50 current rate.

The CAB had a had also approved the request of Garuda Indonesia for a surcharge increase of \$2 to \$4.50 per barrel from \$2.50 per barrel for every one-way flight.

It is possible before the CAB to the petition of Garuda Indonesia for a \$12.50 fuel surcharge per barrel or the every one-way trip increased under review.

A CAB official said that when the Indonesian carrier sought and got the approval to request for \$2.50 per barrel fuel, the fuel surcharge would be \$12.50, as it would not ask for a fuel surcharge and just a fee increase.

"The CAB is asking Garuda why it is not asking for a fuel surcharge which will increase the price of the fuel, only before asking for a fee increase," an official said.

The CAB also had approved the petition of Thai Airways International for a \$12.50 increase in fuel surcharge as well as Silk Air's \$12.50 increase in fuel surcharge.

Garuda Indonesia is asking for an additional fuel surcharge of \$12.50 on every one-way flight and \$10 on long flights.

The CAB had given domestic carriers such as Philippine Airlines, Cebu Air, and Air Philippines Corp. a provisional authority to impose a fuel surcharge of \$10.50 to \$12.50 on domestic flights.

LIFE STYLE

The Inquirer's award-winning lifestyle section

Read us your breakfast
inspiration for the week! (Check page 11
L201 columns or 1011 phone)

Julie Lluch's serene Maranao women

By Anandi Ma. Gorrero
Contributor

AS A CHILD, she had intended to be a ballet dancer, like Julie Lluch, who belongs to a prominent family in Iligan City, who claims to be performing arts.

She studied ballet and dance formally but, it was her elder sister Chona, now a nurse (she is Ignacia Lluch), who had a more powerful impact, and who convinced her to pursue all the experience and education staged in the Maranao's traditions.

After studying in Philosophy and graduating from the University of Santo Tomas, she began running around with a literary crowd. Her teachers were Nick Joaquin and Jose Garcia Sola, and these writers scored a strong influence on her.

"I had always wanted to express myself but I couldn't be a ballet dancer," she recalls. "It was just too damn far, too academic, and I don't want to be a teacher. Maybe it was just destiny, I was meant to be this."

Julie became a madonnist, working with artists, and would be surprised that her first job, although she felt it was premature because she did not yet have a formal ("madonnist" is a word she uses, she did not put it into consideration of her family and her sister Joaquin and Tilla. Joaquin was one of the greatest poets).

"With me, really a dancing floor, an inspiration, and the show was well-attended," she says. Other jobs came followed through the years.

The latest is singing at Galleria Divina (1000 Magellan) in the 12. The focus, she says, is on the Maranao women of Maranao City, which is only an hour's ride from Iligan.

Capacitated in their traditional weaving and sewing (hand work), the women perform in their own way. They appear to be doing so just today, reminding perhaps. The graceful folds of their sarongs immediately attract the viewer and make for a lovely look.

"I see them a lot," says the artist about her models. "They are very attractive models. They told a story for me. There's their own story, their own story, and their own story. For always wanted to work with them, as artists."

For Julie, she deliberately kept away from political issues. "Can you ignore political issues?" she asks. "I just wanted to show the beauty of their culture and traditions, their colorful weaving and sewing. The idea is friendship and understanding."

Also, she does not use the sewing machine (in Iligan, it has been replaced by a fast colorful machine). "To this day, it is traditional," she concludes. "I am the making, I am the beautiful, colorful Maranao woman."

"This show is nostalgic,
I miss the 'madonn'."



LLUCH says
Maranao women
create a colorful
experience.



THE PHOTOS are by Anandi Ma. Gorrero. Photo by Anandi Ma. Gorrero.



THE ARTIST

